



SATURDAY JULY 16, 1904

THE CRY OF THE OLD HOUSE.

Come back!
My little kids, come back!
My little maids, with starched frocks;
My lady, my maids, come back!
The poplar trees are black
Against the keen, lone, throbbing sky;
The tang of the old wood;
The clear dusk from wall to wall,
And the dew fall.
Come back!
I watch, I cry:
Leave the rude wharf, the mart;
Come back!
Else I shall break my heart.
Am I forgot;
My days as they were not?
The warm, sweet, crooning tunes;
The Sunday afternoons,
Wrought but for you;
The larks purring growing tall,
You wreathed in pink and blue,
Within your prayer-book email;
The cupboards carved both in and out,
With curious, prickly vine,
And smelling far and fine;
The pictures in a row,
Of folk you did not know;
The toys, the games, the shrill, gay rout;
The lanterns, that at hour for bed,
A charmed, but homely red,
Went flickering from shed to shed;
The fragrant crumbling, spicy, good,
Brought in from the great wood;
The dark that held you all about;
The Wind that would not go?
Come back, my women and my men,
And take them all again!
Come back!
Come up the still, accustomed, wistful
lands,
The poplar-haunted lands,
You need not call,
For I shall know,
And light the candles tall,
Set wine and loaf a-row.
Come back!
Unlatch the door,
And fall upon my heart once more.
For I shall comfort you, oh lad;
Oh, daughter, I shall make you wholly
glad!
The wreck, the wrong,
The unavailing throng,
The sting, the smart,
Shall be as they were not,
Forgot, forgot!
Come back,
And fall upon my heart!
—Lizette Woodworth Reese, in the Atlantic.

SKIPPING ROCKS
By EDGAR WILTON COOLEY

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THE boy, followed by his dog, swung down the clover-fringed path, under the tangled branches of the trees. He was barefoot, and his arms and legs and face were brown as an Indian's. In the air were the lazy drone of bees. Small, fleecy clouds floated overhead, their shadows scudding across the hills and the river like ebony-winged birds. The ripples of the stream kept singing to the grasses overhanging. Every where was the perfume of the wild rose. At the ford the dog dashed into the stream, lapping the water and splashing it into circling eddies that chased each other across the placid bosom. The boy paused at the brink and picking up a flat rock sent it skipping across the water, far down the stream. This he followed with another and another and yet another. Above him, at the bend of the river, a dozen cattle stood in the shadows, knee-deep in the tide. Along the path, presently, came a man. He was large, portly and well-groomed. There were many streaks of gray in his hair. He paused and watched the boy skipping the rocks. A smile overspread his



HE PAUSED AND WATCHED THE BOY SKIPPING THE ROCKS.

face, and he, too, descended to the water's edge and picked up a large, flat stone. With an awkward swing he sent it across the water. It skipped once, twice, then sank beneath the surface. The boy looked up and laughed. "That ain't the way," he said. "You want to get limber in your joints and stoop down low, like this. Then the rock will go clear into the mud on the other side."

The dog splashed out of the stream and shook the water from his glossy fur. A king-fisher swooped down from a branch with a discordant shriek, skimmed along the surface of the water a short distance, and returned to its perch. "I have come a thousand miles to skip rocks at the old ford, here," the man said, "and now I find I can't do it like I used to."

The boy looked at him wonderingly. "You came a thousand miles to skip rocks?" he asked, incredulously. "Yes," the man replied, gazing across the river at a sandpiper running along the bank. "When I was a lad like you, I used to come down here and skip rocks, just like you have been doing. There used to be a hole right there under the bank, and the sandpiper would

younder, where you see the twig sticking out of the water, there was a muskrat's house."

"If you have a fishin' pole and some minnows I can take you where you can catch some shiners," interposed the boy, his face brightening.

"I'd rather stay here and skip rocks," replied the man. "There wasn't anybody who could beat me at that when I was a boy."

The dog curled himself in the deep grass. From the river's bend came the occasional tinkle of a cow-bell. High overhead a hawk circled slowly in the blue of the sky.

The boy gazed at the man's heavy gold chain and at the diamond in his shirt front.

"Gee, I'll bet you have lots of money," he said.

The man laughed, good naturedly. "Well—yes," he said, "I have all I think I will ever need. But then," he placed his hand on the crown of the boy's torn hat, "I can't skip rocks like you can, can I?"

"No," said the boy, proudly. "There ain't nobody around here can do that."

"I got rich after I left here," said the man, after a pause, "but do you know, I am sorry I ever went away."

"Why?" asked the boy, digging his toes in the wet sand.

"Because I was happier here than I have ever been since," said the man. The boy looked at him questioningly.

"You see, I have forgotten how to skip rocks," continued the man. "That is one of the big things I have lost. And then, don't you know, all the time I have been gone I have seemed to hear the ripple of the river, and have dreamed of wading in the water and seeing the minnows dart away from my bare feet. And there hasn't been a day that I haven't thought of my pure, young face."

The boy grinned. "Who is 'her'?" he asked.

"Oh," said the man, as though awakening from a dream, "she was a little barefoot girl I knew when I was a boy. She was always with me when I was fishing or wading in the water. She grew up and so did I. Then we had a silly quarrel and I went away."

"Gee!" exclaimed the boy, excitedly. "Did you see that big fish jump out of the water?"

The dog raised his head, wearily, gazed at his master a moment, then lowered it again. A blue bird darted through the trees, and a turtle sunning himself on a log, slipped into the water with a faint splash. Somewhere in the damp grass a cricket was chirping.

"I wish I was a man and had lots of money," said the boy.

"And I wish I was just a boy and didn't have to wear shoes and could skip rocks like you can," said the man. "If I could see the sunshine gleaming on the bronze of the hair of that little girl I used to know, I wouldn't care whether I had any money or not."

"I don't like red headed girls," said the boy. "I like girls that's got—Gee! That old fish jumped again. Bet I come down here tomorrow and catch 'im."

"Where does your father live?" asked the man.

The boy threw himself in the grass beside the dog and let his hat fall on the ground.

"Papa's dead," said the boy. "He died long while ago. I guess the reason I don't like red headed girls is because my hair is kinder—what did you call it—brunze?"

He raised himself on one elbow and glanced up the hill.

"And your mother?" asked the man.

"That's her comin' down the path," replied the boy. "Guess she must want me for somethin'."

The man busied himself a few moments with skipping rocks. Then he turned and saw the woman standing before him.

Her sunbonnet had fallen back upon her shoulder and the sunlight was gleaming upon her auburn hair. On her face were the lines of long years of sorrow.

An instant the two gazed into each other's eyes. Then the man held out his hands.

"Jennie," he said, "let's go wading in the river."

The woman's face flushed, but her eyes brightened and she put her hands in his. They were trembling.

"Bob!" she cried; "oh, Bob!" Then gently freeing one hand, she turned her face away and lifted her apron to her eyes.

"I am sorry," he said, "I—"

"No, no," she cried, quickly, "don't be sorry, Bob, don't be sorry; oh, be glad—as glad as I am. I believed—I knew if you heard that—that he was dead—"

Fun For Fun Lovers.

Limit Is Reached.
These blooming correspondence schools ought to be suppressed, snorted the old editor, throwing down the paper he was reading; "they're trouble breeders."

"Why," remarked his assistant, "I never heard you exclaim against them before."

"No, but here's one of them that offers to teach people to write poetry."—Catholic Standard and Times.

No Real Grievance.
"Say," complained the customer, "I want to put in a kick. Remember that ton of coal I got here yesterday?"

"Yes, sir," said the dealer. "What's the matter with it?"

"You sold it to me as your best smokeless. I find it has a lot of broken stone in it."

"Well, stone doesn't smoke, does it? What are you kicking about?"—Chicago Tribune.

To Get the Real Thing.
"I tell you, automobilizing is exciting."

"Think so?"

"I know it."

"Well, if you want real excitement, you want to give up your automobile and take to driving on roads where automobiles are thick. You don't begin to get all there is coming in the excitement line."—Chicago Post.

Steadfast.
"A woman should be able to trust her husband," said the idealist, "and feel that he has the courage to remain steadfast in his purpose, despite rebuffs."

"Well," answered young Mrs. Torkins, "that's exactly the kind of man Charles is. He has lost at every race meeting for the past three years, but he is just as steadfast in purpose as ever."—Washington Star.

Her Preserver.
Miss Pert—Who was that you just bowed to?

Miss Passay (who had once been rescued from a watery grave)—He is a man I can never repay. He is my preserver, my—

Miss Pert—Oh! Is he the manufacturer of that complexion paste?—Philadelphia Press.

Perfect Bliss.
"Name your three wishes," said the good fairy.

And the individual addressed did not hesitate a moment.

"First," he said, "make me a millionaire, with (second), the appetite of a small boy and (third), a digestion to match."—Brooklyn Life.

Dramatic Form.
"How far," mused the dramatist of the old school, "should substance be sacrificed to form?"

The dramatist of the new school stared perplexedly.

"When you say substance, you doubtless mean costume," said he, after a moment.—Puck.

Worked Overtime.
Singleton (at the reception)—Our hostess just introduced me to your wife, old man. What a lovely liquid voice she has!

Wedderly—Yes; but it's trifle too liquid to suit me. It never dries up.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Lightning Change.
Husband-in-Waiting—I must take you to see the woman lightning-change artist at the halls.

Husband—Great! She puts on her hat in less than 15 minutes.—Punch.

A One-Sided Affair.
Should Satan ever go to law He'll win his case, I'm satisfied; Because the lawyers, one and all, Will doubtless be upon his side.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

CONSIDERING PRICE OF COAL.
Bobuppe—It's a shame the way he treated you, but you should heap coals of fire on his head.

Flareuppe—What! With coal at the present price? Say, I'm not that fond of revenge.—Chicago Journal.

The Audience.
They listen to the orator. Then as they homeward walk, They say: "We don't believe him. But we like to hear him talk."—Washington Star.

Unquestionable Evidence.
"Are those girls really friends?"

"Oh, yes, indeed. Why, there isn't even a sting to the compliments they pay each other."—Chicago Post.

Was She in Danger?
She—I will scream if you kiss me. He—Then I won't kiss you. She—But—er—I feel just like screaming, anyway.—Judge.

Take-a-Bite.
Benson—Bought a sawmill, eh? What are you going to do with it? Jensen—Bring out a new breakfast food.—Town Topics.

Variable.
The conversation turned upon the elderman from the 'Steenth ward. "What do you suppose he's worth?" asked the man with the patch over his eye.

"Nobody knows," said the man with the cinnamon beard. "Sometimes you can buy him for \$50 and at other times it takes \$500."—Chicago Tribune.

Unprotected.
The stage manager catches one of the actors smoking behind the scenes. "Here! you can't smoke on the stage," he says.

"What's the odds? The scenery is fire-proof."

"But you're not."

As the actor discovered when he got his two weeks' notice.—Judge.

She Hated to Tell Her Age.
Judge—How old are you? Lady Witness—I can't remember. Judge—What year were you born in? Lady Witness—I forget.

Judge—Well, madam, your instinct for self-preservation still seems to work all right.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Inadequate Pay.
A man and his bride by the parson were tied. And when the performance was done, He examined his fee; the "Alas!" exclaimed he; "I add one to one and make one."—Philadelphia Press.

HIS INVENTION.
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An Easy Way Out.
"So this is your birthday? How old are you?"

"Don't you know," she indignantly replied, "that it is a sign of bad breeding to ask a lady about her age?"

"Oh, no; not in all cases. It is only unmannerly to ask how old a lady is when one has reason to believe she is old enough to be ashamed of it."

Then she invited him to sit down so they could have "a nice, long visit."—Chicago Record-Herald.

A Professional.
Tramp—No'm, I am not a wood-sawyer, mum. I draw. Gimme a square meal and I'll show you.

Housekeeper—Well, it's worth it to see a man like you do anything at all. Tramp (after meal)—Thankee, mum. Now I'll go and lie down in the sun.

"But you promised to draw."

"Yes'm. I draw flies."—N. Y. Weekly.

Her Reproof.
"Did I understand you to say you courted investigation?" said Mr. Gratton Grabb's wife.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Well, it is a very unfortunate phrase. Everybody who has read anything from the classic poets to a seaside novel knows that a man doesn't mean half he says when he's courting."—Washington Star.

Unsatisfactory.
"I watched for opportunity."

"And it never came?"

"Oh, yes, it did."

"And you grabbed it?"

"I did."

"Well, I found it was only an opportunity to make a fool of myself."—Chicago Post.

Nearing the Limit.
"Do you know, darling," said the love-sick young man who was busy planting microbes, "that I believe it makes me a better man every time I kiss you?"

"Well," rejoined the taffy-haired girl in the parlor scene, "at the pace you are going now there will soon be no more room for improvement."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Went with Her.
Mr. Subbubs—So you got rid of the girl at last?

Mrs. Subbubs—Yes; she left a few minutes ago, and—

Mr. Subbubs—Huh! She took her time.

Mrs. Subbubs—Yes, and our time, too. The parlor clock is gone.—Philadelphia Press.

About the Size of It.
"Mamma," queried small Floramay, "what is the difference between biography and autobiography?"

"Biography, my dear," replied the wise mother, "shows a man as he is, while autobiography shows him as he thinks he is."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Only a Few Scraps.
He—When a young couple are married they always have good things to eat during the honeymoon.

She—And after the honeymoon, what?

"Oh, then come the scraps."—Yonkers Statesman.

A Sure Way.
"Why did you borrow that \$10 of Jaggsby? You surely didn't need it."

"No; but he's such a deuced bore, I wanted some plausible excuse for not noticing him on the street."—Puck.

Caught.
I wrote the girl a letter. Oh! Most unlucky day! Her lawyer said that letter; It's marked "Exhibit A."—Philadelphia Press.

QUITE SIGNIFICANT.
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Poorly Supported.
Bacon—How did you enjoy the new play, last night?

Egbert—Not at all; I never knew a star to be more poorly supported!

"And yet they say she has four living husbands!"—Yonkers Statesman.

Evidence of Effort.
"Has you association ever accomplished anything noteworthy?"

"Yes, indeed," answered young Mrs. Torkins. "You just ought to see the unfinished business it has accumulated."—Washington Star.

Still Wearing Black.
Smith—Brown has been a widower three years and he's still wearing mourning.

Jones—You don't say! Smith—Yes; he dyes his whiskers.—Chicago Daily News.

Rich Tastes.
Mrs. Newlywed—John, I think baby has swallowed my pearl necklace.

Mr. Newlywed—Gad! You seem determined to bring that young one up with the tastes of a millionaire's child.—Judge.

Does Food Affect the Face?
She—That new boarder who came today has a beautiful olive complexion.

He—Well, after she's been here a few weeks I guess she'll have a prune complexion.—Yonkers Statesman.

Those Dear Friends.
Stella—Is her house furnished in any especial period?

Bella—No; exclamation points.—Brooklyn Life.

Easy Either Way.
They were discussing domestic matters with masculine confidence.

"There's only one way to keep a cook," asserted one.

"How is that?" asked the other.

"But suppose you're already married?"

"Easy again. Any time that you can't make the cook your wife, why, make your wife the cook."—Brooklyn Eagle.



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